Auto Theft Prevention

For Dealerships and Auto Rental Locations in the 17th District

There has been a pattern of Auto Thieves targeting Auto Dealerships and Rental locations in the surrounding suburbs and Chicago. Below are just some tips and clues to make it harder for the thieves to become successful. Together we can make a difference.

- ✓ Please secure the keys for the vehicles on your site.
- ✓ Please secure your Dealer Plates and temp tags. They also have been reported as stolen from locations.
- ✓ Lock them in a lock box and do not put all of the keys, plates or tags in the same box.
- ✓ Make sure all vehicles are locked and secure and do not leave keys in the vehicle at any time.
- ✓ Do not leave vehicles running and unattended at any time.

Common-sense measures you can take to help prevent your auto from being stolen:

- Always park in well-lit, heavily traveled areas, as close to your destination as possible.
- When you park, always roll the windows up tight, lock all doors, and take the keys, key fob with you.
- Never leave your car with the motor running, even if only for a minute to run into a store or your home.
- Never hide spare keys in a secret place or in a magnetic key box under the hood. Car thieves routinely check the visors and ash trays, and look under floor mats for separate locations.
- Some thieves use tow trucks to take cars. To avoid being towed by a thief, turn your wheels toward the curb and apply your emergency brake.

- Leave your car in gear or park. When parking a front-wheel-drive car, place your vehicle in park and apply the emergency brake. If you have a stick shift, put the gear into forward or reverse and apply the emergency brake.
- If you have a garage, use it. Lock both your car and the garage.
- Avoid leaving your automatic garage door opener in your car. Don't make it easy for a thief who enters your garage through a side door and breaks into your car to ge the vehicle out.
- Keep your vehicle's title at home, not in the glove compartment of your car. This will prevent a thief from using the title to "prove" he owns the car.
- Check periodically to ensure that your vehicle identification number (VIN) is intact. This is a small metal plate, usually by the driver's side, where the dashboard and windshield meet.
- Consider etching your VIN into all car windows, T-tops, and other expensive removable parts. This will help the police identify stolen auto parts.
- Drop your business card or other identifier down the window slot in the door panel. This may assist police in identifying a stolen vehicle or stolen parts.
- Carry a card listing your license plate number, VIN, engine type, and body style. Relay this information to the police quickly if your car is stolen.
- Install locks that deter thefts. Tapered door locks, for example, keep thieves from using coat hangers to open car doors.
- Install and activate anti-theft devices. These include fuel cutoff or ignition kill switches that make the vehicle inoperable; sensors and motion detectors; computerized tracking transmitters; steering column locks; etc. Your insurance company may offer discounts on your comprehensive coverage for installing certain devices.
- If you see someone tampering with your vehicle, use discretion about approaching the person. He or she may be armed. Instead, call 9-1-1 and inform the call taker that you are reporting an auto theft "in progress".
- When selling vehicle, don't let a stranger take it for a test drive alone. If a prospective buyer wants to take the car to a mechanic for an appraisal, volunteer to deliver and pick up the car.
- When buying a used car, be certain that the seller's name and address are verified, and be sure that VIN on the registration card is the same as the one on the car.



Please contact the 017th District CAPS office if you have any further issues or concerns.

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